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## Government led by Chancellor Faymann completes one year

On 23 November 2008, the Social Democratic Party of Austria (SPÖ) and the Austrian People's Party (ÖVP) agreed to revive the grand coalition. Precisely one year later, Federal Chancellor Werner Faymann and Vice Chancellor and Minister of Finance Josef Pröll affirmed the advantages of their cooperation vis-à-vis reporters. Faymann thanked for the "good cooperation" and stated that he would again decide in favour of forming a coalition with the ÖVP. Pröll underlined that there was a "proven capacity for consensus".

According to Faymann, the "close, good cooperation in the government" has led to many concrete results and reforms, e.g. tax cuts, economic stimulus packages and a 'training guarantee' to young people. The fact that Austria reported the lowest increase in (youth) unemployment in Europe – amidst the most severe crisis – was certainly the best testimony one could think of", said Faymann. The coalition government had more projects in the pipeline. In this context, the Federal Chancellor mentioned the reforms in education, research and administration. To mark the first anniversary of his chancellorship, Faymann will hold a programmatic speech offering a review of the past achievements and an outlook for the government's work up to 2013 at Vienna's Hofburg on 2 December 2009 (anniversary of swearing-in). In an interview with the weekly "Format" (27 November 2009) Faymann stressed how important it was to continue proving the reliability of the coalition – with a view to protecting the interests of the population, i.e. safeguarding and creating jobs, increasing the purchasing power, stabilising the markets, social security. Education and training were vital in this process. The objective was to make young people fit for the challenges of international competition in a globalised world, stated Faymann.

Faymann rejected tax increases: "It is pointless to raise mass taxes. This reduces the purchasing power." He pled, however, in favour of having a closer look at the accounts, checking the distribution of the income and expenditure. ■

## President Heinz Fischer announced candidacy for a second term in 2010

On 23 November 2009, Federal President Heinz Fischer announced in a video message on the

Internet that he would run for a second term of office. The presidential election would take place on 25 April 2010. He had been encouraged to seek re-election from many sides and hoped for "wide red-white-red support", said Fischer. So far no rival candidates have been presented. ■

## Staff representation elections in federal civil service

At the staff representation elections of the federal civil servants (25/26 November 2009), the Christian Unionists (FCG Group in the Public Service Union, GÖD) succeeded in increasing their absolute majority, the Group of Social Democratic Unionists (FSG) and the Independent Unionists (UGÖD) suffered significant losses. Increases were reported by AUF, the faction of the Austrian Freedom Party. Preliminary result: FCG 55.95% (+5.78% from 2004); FSG 28.58% (-5.96%); UGÖD 7.52%; (-2.00%); AUF 5.72% (+2.09%); others 2.13% (+0.1%). ■

## Pensions increase by 1.5% in 2010

On 24 November 2009, the government and the representatives of senior citizens agreed on a pension increase. In 2010 pensions will be up by 1.5%. Pensioners receiving less than 1,300 euro will be granted a one-time bonus; a total of 35 million euro has been earmarked for this purpose. Those drawing more than 2,466 euro will get a fixed amount of 36.99 euro. ■

## Same-sex registered partnership

On 17 November 2009 the federal government adopted the registered partnership for same-sex couples. District and municipal authorities will be responsible for registration, which grants same-sex partners the same status as married couples in important areas, e.g. pension law, duties of assistance, maintenance obligations, entitlement to refuse to testify before court. Adoption and artificial insemination remain forbidden.

Moreover, the Council of Ministers approved the financial restructuring of the health insurance institutions, a children's legal advisor in divorce disputes, a new data protection law, a new budget law for ministries, prohibition of bullying at work and a higher women's share in the civil service law as well as more rights to the victims of violence and sexual offences. ■

Faymann: "Man of reconciliation",  
"first woman in leading EU position"

At an extraordinary summit in Brussels on 19 November 2009, the EU heads of state and government selected Belgian Prime Minister Herman Van Rompuy as the first Permanent European Council President and British EU Trade Commissioner Catherine Ashton as the first EU "Foreign Minister". Federal Chancellor Werner Faymann welcomed the election of the EU's new top duo.

Faymann praised Rompuy as a personality "seeking reconciliation in Europe" and who would not give preferential treatment to the large Member States. According to Faymann, Van Rompuy's views concerning a financial transactions tax and the rejection of Turkey's EU accession were close to Austria's position. Catherine Ashton was a "very good choice", he himself had pled in favour of selecting a woman for this position. Ashton, who will also become Vice President of the EU Commission, was the first woman leader in the EU, stressed Faymann. The decision to nominate her had been taken before the summit at a meeting of Social Democratic heads of government in the Austrian EU representation in Brussels. ■

Johannes Hahn is new EU Commissioner for Regional Policy

Austrian Minister of Science Johannes Hahn will become Commissioner for Regional Policy. This was announced by EU Commission President José Manuel Barroso at the presentation of his new team on 27 November 2009. Based on the budget allocation, Hahn will be responsible for managing the second highest sub-budget of the Union (after agriculture). Financial resources of 347 billion euro are earmarked for regional policy, this is more than one third of the EU's total budget. In a first reaction, Hahn promised to ensure "that the money would really go where it was needed".

Chancellor Werner Faymann was pleased about selecting Hahn for this "extremely important policy area for the future", his agenda comprised jobs, regional development and social cohesion in Europe. The joint red-white-red efforts had made this success possible: "I am proud that the numerous talks I held about this matter led to this great result for Austria", said Faymann. Vice Chancellor Finance Minister Josef Pröll em-

phasised that "the best for Austria" had been achieved. Foreign Minister Michael Spindelegger regarded the decision as a "sign of appreciation of Austria's role in the EU". ■

German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle in Vienna

At his first official visit to Austria on 25 November 2009, new German Foreign Minister Guido Westerwelle expressed his commitment to a good neighbourly policy "on an equal footing". His official programme included meetings with Federal President Heinz Fischer, Foreign Minister Michael Spindelegger and IAEA Director-General Mohamed ElBaradei. Westerwelle reiterated that Germany would not accept Iran's nuclear armament. His talks with Foreign Minister Spindelegger also focused on questions concerning compensation payments for German students studying at Austrian universities. ■

UN/women's rights: 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Cedaw

To mark the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the "UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (Cedaw)" as well as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (25 November), Women's Minister Gabriele Heinisch-Hosek and Foreign Minister Michael Spindelegger hosted a ceremony at the Federal Chancellery on 27 November 2009. In a joint press release both stressed that the UN Women's convention was the most important legal basis in women's policy for engagement against all forms of discrimination. Elimination had not yet been achieved, therefore all efforts had to be bundled. Both policy-makers and society had to make a contribution to gender equality. Women's rights were human rights, from which ultimately all would benefit. ■

Peace-keeping missions of the Federal Army are continued

On 20 November 2009, the Main Committee of Parliament approved the extension of numerous UN and EU missions of the federal army, police and judicial forces, including missions in Kosovo, in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Cyprus and the Golan Heights. ■

## Summer tourism 2009: close to the record result of last year

Despite the economic crisis, the Austrian tourist enterprises reported only minor losses in the summer season 2009. The number of visitor nights decreased only slightly by 1.1% to 61.70 million from the level of the record summer season in 2008, as the Austrian statistical office "Statistik Austria" informed on 24 November 2009. The result for the summer season improved as tourism picked up in August (+4.1%) und September (+1.4%). A new record of nights of domestic tourists (+3.4%) was registered.

In the first half of the summer season (May to July) the number of visitor nights decreased by 4.9% year-on-year, while a plus of 2.5% was registered between August and October. A total of 19.88 million Austrians stayed in domestic hotels and guesthouses (+2%) in the past summer season. According to statistical experts, this is a "new record", surpassing the "top summer of 1991" (18.78 million visitor nights of domestic tourists in a total of 78.12 million nights).

However, the number of foreign guests dropped by 2.6% to 41.82 million. Minor decreases of German (-0.6%) and Dutch (-0.7%) tourists were reported. A double-digit decline in visitor nights of Hungarians (-13.5%), Poles (-16.1%), Romanians (-15.5%) and Russians (-30.8%) was recorded. The loss of British tourists (-19.1%) and Swedes (-30.4%) was significant. In contrast, visitor nights of Swiss (+1.9%), Italian (+3.0%) and French tourists (+1.8%) went up.

The number of arrivals decreased to 17.24 million (-0.5%). The arrivals of domestic guests rose by 3.4%, reaching a record level of 6.35 million. The number of arrivals of foreigners declined to 10.88 million (-2.6%).

Between January and October visitor nights totalled 110.62 million; this is 1.9% below the level of 2008. Arrivals also went down (-0.9% to 28.24 million). Domestic tourism – visitor nights and arrivals – has shown a positive trend (+1.8% and +2.6%, respectively), while the data on foreign tourists were negative (-3.2% and -2.6%). Economic Minister Reinhold Mitterlehner, who is responsible for tourism, as well as representatives of the tourist industry were pleased about the relatively small decline in summer tourism in view of the global recession. The record numbers of Austrians spending their holidays in Austria demonstrated "that the advertising campaign addressing domestic tourists had been an optimal

decision", stressed Mitterlehner. Advertising in geographically close markets also proved right, as increases in the number of tourists from Switzerland and Italy showed.

The Austrian Hotel Association (ÖHV) hopes for increases in the budget for the Austrian Tourist Office (ÖW) and a reduction of the depreciation period of investments. According to a press release of the ÖHV (27 November 2009), Minister of Finance Josef Pröll and the ÖHV shared "a common position". ■

## OECD forecast: faster growth also for Austria

The OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) issued a minor upward revision of its forecast. Austria's economy would shrink by 3.8% this year and increase by 0.9% in 2010. The global economy is now expected to grow by 3.4% in 2010; in June a rate of 2.3% had been predicted. However, no trend reversal is imminent in the labour market. In Austria the unemployment rate would increase to 7.1% on annual average in 2010 and to 7.3% in 2011 (euro-zone: 10.8%).

Austrian politicians were highly pleased about the fact that the OECD had praised Austria's economic stimulus programme. In a press release of 19 November 2009, Federal Chancellor Werner Faymann pointed out that Austria was recovering from the "worst recession in decades", as the OECD put it, which was also due to "supportive policies". The Ministries of Economy and Social Affairs aim at fighting recession by continuing funding programmes for thermal rehabilitation, initiatives for further training as well as campaigns geared to the needs of long-term unemployed persons. ■

## Bank aid package effective until the end of 2010

On 17 November 2009, the Council of Ministers gave the go-ahead for prolonging the bank aid package. The necessary legal basis and measures will remain effective one year longer, i.e. up to the end of 2010.

The unlimited guarantee for savings deposits adopted in autumn was not renewed. Thus the government will guarantee only 100,000 euro per saver and bank as from 1 January 2010. ■

## High technology: new Siemens competence centres in Austria

At a joint press conference on 10 November 2009, Minister of Infrastructure Doris Bures and Brigitte Ederer, CEO of Siemens AG Austria, announced that six research and development competence centres would be established in Austria. They explained that this was a positive effect of the "Headquarters Programme" of the Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology and was a shining example of the successful cooperation between politics and business. "Despite the economically difficult times, we have succeeded in creating highly qualified jobs, strengthening innovative capabilities and achieving positive employment targets", stressed Bures. "We managed to lure 'headquarters competences' in six research fields with 220 employees and a total investment volume of 25 million euro to Austria", Ederer stated proudly. Minister of Infrastructure Bures considers it vital "not to compete with low-wage countries but to have an edge over our international competitors in high technology". Siemens is an excellent example of this approach. "The establishment of research facilities would not be possible without the research subsidy of the Ministry and the good cooperation with Minister Bures", said Ederer. The competence centres were leading in promising research fields, such as renewable energy, wireless communication or industrial control systems.

According to Bures, it was Austria's goal to move up to the top 3 of the most innovative economies and to increase the R & D ratio to 3% in a first step and to 4% in 2020 by cooperating with the economic sector. This year a total of 350 million euro would be spent on applied research, corresponding to a plus of 13%. With this funding programme for research, Austria aimed at positioning itself among the international leaders in research and development. ■

## Malmö: Austria is among the winners of the eGovernment Awards

In the framework of the 5<sup>th</sup> EU Ministerial eGovernment Conference in Malmö (Sweden), the European eGovernment Awards were bestowed for the fourth time. The European Commission grants them for innovative online projects in public administration. The very purpose of these awards is to promote the exchange

of good practices in Europe with a view to reaching the Lisbon targets by 2010.

In 2003 Austria had received an award for HELP.gv.at. In 2005 it was among the finalists with the "e-Law" application of the Federal Chancellery and COURTPUB of the Ministry of Justice. Civil Protection Online (regional government of Styria), the Chancellery's ELAKimBund (Electronic File in the Federal Government) and eAMA, an application of the agricultural market agency AMA were selected as "good practice cases". In 2007 the Ministry of Justice became a finalist with its electronic documents archiving system. The 2009 Awards were granted in the categories: "eGovernment supporting the Single Market", "eGovernment empowering citizens", "eGovernment empowering businesses" and "eGovernment enabling administrative efficiency and effectiveness":

Eight out of 260 projects entered came from Austria in 2009. Four of the eight domestic projects made it among the 52 finalists that were presented at the eGovernment Awards ceremony to the European public and highlight Austria's pioneering role in European eGovernment.

In the category "eGovernment supporting the Single Market" the winning project was the IT application "European Order for Payment" (EU-OPA) jointly developed by the Austrian Ministry of Justice (with the support of the Federal Computing Centre) and the Justice Administration of Berlin. In Austria the Commercial District Court Vienna is competent for all European payment orders, while in Germany the Court Berlin-Wedding acts as "Germany's court for European payment orders". Since the introduction of the European payment order in Austria and Germany no less than 3,000 proceedings with a total amount of claims of about 60 million euro have been handled with the support of electronic data processing. Minister of Justice Claudia Bandion-Ortner was convinced that the eGovernment Award would boost the interest of other EU Member States in this pioneering IT solution. France had already decided in favour of this open application, while other countries had entered into negotiations with Austria.

In the category "eGovernment enabling administrative efficiency and effectiveness", the procurement portal of the federal procurement agency (Bundesbeschaffung GmbH) came in second with its user-friendly implementation of the eProcurement solution, divided into a section for suppliers (public tenders, information on the

eShop, etc.) and a customer area (product catalogues, contracts, etc.). The federal procurement agency scored extra points with its eShop, allowing bundled and efficient procurement. In 2008 goods and services amounting to 829.8 million euro were claimed from the procurement agency's portfolio. Thanks to bundling and standardising customer demands, cost-savings of 177.6 million euro or 17.6% were achieved. About 200 million euro of the total volume was procured through the eShop of the agency. 12,800 customers are registered in the eShop, who placed about 36,000 online orders in 2009.

Thanks to its experience, the federal procurement agency sets an example in the field of centralised procurement not only in Austria but across Europe. Every year the federal procurement agency's forum offers about 60 events to pass on its knowledge. The agency is also a welcome partner of the European Union in the knowledge transfer to new or future members in EU twinning projects. Recently, it became active in Estonia, Romania and Bulgaria. But also in the framework of the EU project "Pan-European Public Procurement Online" (PEPPOL), which is to facilitate cross-border procurement, the federal procurement agency's eShop serves as a model for future solutions.

In the category "eGovernment empowering citizens" the personalised e-government portal myHELP.gv.at made it into the finals. MyHELP was put into operation in early 2009 and is a tremendous innovation in the field of e-government services. Based on personal data (age, residence, marital status, etc.) and the specific interests of a person, myHELP supports the users with individual information, including for example reminders when a passport has to be renewed. It has become possible to realise this new user-oriented application of the administration by linking the person-related data in an effective way with the huge knowledge pool of HELP.gv.at. Registration through the citizen's card ensures that the personalised service portal meets the strict data protection and security requirements in Austria.

The management information system of the Austrian tax and customs administration of the Federal Ministry of Finance became another finalist in the category "eGovernment enabling administrative efficiency and effectiveness".

In the framework of the reform process 2005, the structure and procedures of the Austrian finance

administration were reorganised. In addition, state-of-the art business management instruments were introduced and a change in culture was promoted. The aim of introducing a performance-driven management is a service-oriented, more cost-effective, flexible and efficient tax and customs administration. The core of the project is an IT-based management information system with efficiency ratios to measure success.

[www.digitales.oesterreich.gv.at](http://www.digitales.oesterreich.gv.at) ■

## ÖNB: Wenceslaus of Bohemia

The Austrian National Library (ÖNB) presents in the exhibition "Wenceslaus of Bohemia – Saint and Ruler" in its "Prunksaal" ("State Hall") until 31 January 2010. Wenceslaus was presumably born in 907 and murdered by his brother in 935. He promoted Christianisation in the country ridden with religious wars, built churches, visited prisons and cared for the poor and weak. This is why Wenzel is worshipped to the present day and has been exploited for the purposes of all religious and political groups.

The exhibition focuses on a precious rarity of early modern bookmaking: a manuscript about the life of Wenceslaus of Bohemia acquired by UNIQA insurance company and presented to the public for the first time at the Austrian National Library.

Wenceslaus' charitable Christian deeds, political functions as well as the miracles attributed to him after his death are illustrated on the basis on this treasure. Thanks to a rare lucky coincidence, it became possible to juxtapose the manuscript of UNIQA with a similar copy from the ÖNB's Collection of Manuscripts and Antique Prints. The manuscript created by painter Matthias Hutský from Křivoklat (former German name: Pürglitz) around 1585 shows a sequence of pictures that is almost identical with that of the UNIQA codex. This is the first time that these objects that belong together but were geographically separated due to their eventful history are showcased jointly – embedded in the imaginative exhibition setting created by stage designer Christof Cremer.

This singular show will travel from Vienna to the Czech National Museum in Prague. After that, the precious manuscript owned by UNIQA will remain in the headquarters of the insurance company in the Czech capital. [www.onb.ac.at](http://www.onb.ac.at) ■

## Janáček production of Vienna Festival cheered in the USA

In 2007 leading international critics awarded the production of the Vienna Festival (Wiener Festwochen) "From the House of the Dead" by Leoš Janáček the title "best production of the year". Under the festival's musical director Stéphane Lissner, the work was produced by Patrice Chéreau, the Mahler Chamber Orchestra was conducted by Pierre Boulez. The recent performance led by Esa-Pekka Salonen at the New York Met also became a huge success.

[www.metoperafamily.org](http://www.metoperafamily.org) ■

## Wien Museum presents "Battle over the City" at Künstlerhaus

Wien Museum presents the extensive show "Battle over the City" at Vienna's Künstlerhaus (closing on 28 March 2010). On two levels, the exhibition offers a cultural-historical panorama of a phase in contemporary history that seemed to be democratic on the surface but was challenged in many ways, not only in political-ideological terms but also artistically and technically. "Battle over the City" does not rely on seemingly conspicuous fateful years like "1938". It takes the visitors into a period when the Viennese Nazis were relatively weak, the "Red Vienna" still seemed strong and self-confident. The rift between city and province, between Vienna and the Länder, between urban-modern creative intent and Catholic-Conservative concepts of conservation became manifest. The show addresses the smouldering but still undecided struggle. It uses media such as posters, new music (jazz), film documents, hiking passes, paintings by Alfons Walde, Franz Lerch, Rudolf Wacker and Franz Sedlacek, a film compiled by Gustav Deutsch with rare footage from private film-makers, a bust of Viktor Adler and also then new techniques such as the conveyor belt, the cable car or electrical appliances like the shaver.

The exhibition covers a total of 17 rooms and is divided into major sections, e.g. "The ideology of the "Heimat" (one's home country)", "Floe and powder snow", "The battlefield of politics" or "Advertising and consumption".

Visitors of the comprehensive exhibition compiled by 24 researchers are invited to come back. The Museum offers half-price admission to those returning and bringing their original ticket. The supporting programme, including city walks,

lectures, song recitals and film screenings, is listed in a brochure of more than 30 pages. The exhibition catalogue will be published in December. [www.wienmuseum.at](http://www.wienmuseum.at) ■

## Vienna pays homage to Francesca Habsburg

In the presence of arts and culture luminaries, members of the Habsburg family and Vienna's municipality, Vienna's Executive Councillor for Culture Andreas Mailath-Pokorny conferred the Golden Badge for Meritorious Service to the Land of Vienna on art manager Francesca Habsburg at Vienna City Hall on 26 November 2009. Regardless of her well-known name, she had earned herself a reputation in the international art world, stressed the Executive Councillor for Culture. When the Foundation Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary (T-B A21) – specialised in collecting and exhibiting contemporary art – opened in 2002, Vienna did not only win an important cultural venue, but Francesca Habsburg herself became an outstanding "art ambassador" – thanks to her extensive knowledge and excellent networks – whom Vienna is proud of. Undoubtedly, Francesca Habsburg received the high distinction not only for her "artistic" merits but also for her social commitment. She supports the association "Unser Kind" ("Our Child"), taking care of the about 9,000 babies who are born before the planned date in Austria every year.

The actual presentation speech was held by former Vice Chancellor and Vienna's Vice Mayor Erhard Busek, who – just like Mailath – stressed the internationality, intellectual openness and artistic curiosity of the laureate. The show "Transitory Objects" featuring contemporary Turkish art currently presented at T-B A21 demonstrated that art was vital even in politics to overcome boundaries. In Europe many developments were still in their infancy, reminded Busek on the "eve" of the entry into force of the Lisbon Treaty. Francesca Habsburg, who has been married to Karl, the grandson of Austria's last Emperor since 1993, studied art at the St. Martin's School of Art and history of art at the ICA in London. In 1989 she became the chief curator of the collection Thyssen-Bornemisza in Lugano.

"Unser Kind": the account for donations of professor Pollak (General Hospital of Vienna): 288 437 887/08, BLZ 20111; [www.tba21.org/](http://www.tba21.org/) ■

## Sport and justice join forces in the combat against doping

The federal government managed to reach an agreement in the combat against doping. Minister of Sport Norbert Darabos and Minister of Justice Claudia Bandion-Ortner presented a wide range of measures to tighten anti-doping provisions on 18 November 2009. Athletes caught doping will be charged with serious fraud based on the Criminal Code.

“The new legislative texts allow us to take another important step towards a credible and comprehensive anti-doping policy. Together we found a reasonable approach to the necessary tightening up of anti-doping provisions. In Austrian sport there is no longer any room for doping“, stated Minister of Sport Norbert Darabos.

After the planned amendment of the Criminal Code, an athlete will be punished in accordance with Section 147 (serious fraud) if “he/she commits fraud (entailing more than insignificant damage) by cheating for the purpose of doping in sport by using a substance or method forbidden under the Anti-Doping Convention“. Athletes convicted of serious fraud will face up to three years in jail. In cases in which the damage exceeds 50,000 euro, the maximum penalty is imprisonment for up to ten years.

Parliament will also adopt tighter provisions for the Federal Anti-Doping Act at the beginning of 2010. Adult athletes and coaches suspended because of doping are confronted with a lifelong loss of funding from the federal sports promotion scheme, any funds received after the doping offence have to be repaid and the suspension period of athletes who belonged to the National Test Pool at the end of their active career and want to restart their active career is increased from six to twelve months.

In addition, a legal basis for intensifying cooperation in the combat against doping between the customs authority, criminal prosecution authorities and NADA Austria is created. An improved legal framework for customs authorities will allow them to take more effective measures against the import of doping substances.

If medical drugs contain substances forbidden under the WADA Code, this has to be stated on the package inserts to provide athletes and physicians with clearer information.

The amendments are expected to enter into force on 1 January 2010. ■

## Five-point package of measures for more physical exercise at school

With a joint package of measures, the Federal Ministry of Education, Art and Culture as well as the Ministry of Defence and Sports ensure better integration of sport into the school curriculum. A campaign to improve the quality of physical education in primary schools, a framework agreement to involve organised sports in schools, the re-launch of the Austrian school sports championship, two million euro for measures promoting the exercise programmes of the sports federations in primary schools and nurseries, an enhanced role of sports programmes in day schools as well as the establishment of an inter-ministerial working group are the cornerstones of the package presented by Minister of Sport Norbert Darabos and Minister of Education Claudia Schmied at the House of Sports in Vienna on Monday.

“Sport has many salutary consequences. Regular physical exercise has beneficial effects on people’s health and may contribute to conscious lifestyles“, said Minister of Education Claudia Schmied. “The government programme defines sports as a ‘cross-cutting subject’. The goal of increasing physical activities in the population can be achieved only jointly with the support of other spheres in society“, said Minister of Sport Norbert Darabos. Therefore, cooperation with the Ministry of Education was an important step towards more exercise for children. “Thanks to this package of measures, we made a crucial step ahead. Certainly, we still have to realise the long-term objective of giving children an opportunity for daily physical exercise at school. But with this set of measures we have already achieved more in this area than with the effort of the past years.“

This package does not mean that our work of promoting physical exercise at school has been completed. The realisation of our project “daily exercise in all schools” remains a vital goal. The joint framework agreement provides a first legally binding basis for the long-term cooperation between the two ministries and the Federal Sports Federation (BSO). ■